



IDAHO FARM BUREAU

Quarterly

A PUBLICATION OF IDAHO FARM BUREAU

Spring 2018 • Volume 18, Issue 2



Truffles being found in Idaho
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The Zipline

Heartbreaking time for dairy

By Zippy Duvall
President American Farm
Bureau Federation



Much like spring follows winter, every dairy market boom is followed by a bust and vice versa. Dairy farmers are entering a fourth straight year of low prices as global milk production has grown faster than demand. The all-milk price averaged more than \$25 per hundredweight at certain points in 2014, but it has been downhill from there. The milk price hit just \$15.30 per hundredweight as of

February 2018, and it's not expected to get above \$16-\$17 this year.

With no price recovery in sight, many of us personally know a dairy farming family that is getting out of production after generations of being in the business. About 10 percent of dairy farms across the nation have shut down over the past year.

Just in the last few days, I have heard from good dairy farming friends in Georgia that

See DUVALL, page 7

The President's Desk

Important to get trade negotiations right

By Bryan Searle
President Idaho Farm
Bureau Federation



Trade is vital to America's farmers and ranchers and that's why it's critical for our leaders to make sure they get it right when negotiating and re-negotiating trade deals.

As an example of how important trade is to Idaho producers, consider

this: If all the food grown in this state had to be consumed here, every Idahoan would have to

eat 45 potatoes every day, as well as two pounds of beef, three cups of beans, two onions, two pounds of cheese and 208 slices of bread.

Idaho's agricultural sector exports about \$2 billion worth of food and food products to foreign nations each year and one in every six rows of Idaho potatoes is exported. Fifty percent of the wheat grown in Idaho is exported to foreign markets and overseas sales of ag products support 24,000 jobs in this state.

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Inside Farm Bureau

Farm Bureau's volunteer leaders

By Rick Keller
CEO Idaho Farm
Bureau Federation



When you take a half-hour out of your busy day to plan with a few of your fellow farmers and ranchers on improving a rural road, when you rush through your evening chores and hurry your supper so that you can walk into a Farm Bureau meeting on time, when you get up in a meeting and say what you believe, even though you don't particularly

like to talk, you are making a real contribution to self-government.

You are more important than you think. You, as an individual member of Farm Bureau, are part of one of the most fundamental and powerful voluntary organizations.

I have watched many in agriculture give back to their industry through volunteering. Seldom have I witnessed more giving of time and resources than with farmers and ranchers.

See KELLER, page 12



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Printed by: Owyhee Publishing, Homedale, ID

IDAHO FARM BUREAU QUARTERLY

USPS #022-899, is published quarterly by the
IDAHO FARM BUREAU FEDERATION,
275 Tierra Vista Drive, Pocatello, ID 83201.

POSTMASTER send changes of address to:

IDAHO FARM BUREAU QUARTERLY
P.O. Box 4848, Pocatello, ID 83205-4848.
Periodicals postage paid at Pocatello, ID
and additional mailing offices.

SUBSCRIPTION: \$4 a year included in Farm Bureau dues.

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Cover: Truffle farmer Paul Beckman, left, and chef Richard Jimenez, pause with Beckman's dog, Gitana, while hunting for truffles April 15 in an orchard in Eagle, Idaho. For a story on Idaho truffle farming, see page 4. Photo by Steve Ritter





Photo by Steve Ritter

Truffle farmer Paul Beckman hunts for truffles April 15 in his orchard in the foothills of Eagle, Idaho.

Expensive truffles being grown in Idaho

By Sean Ellis

Idaho Farm Bureau Federation

EAGLE – Truffles, the most expensive food in the world on an ounce-for-ounce basis, are starting to be found in the foothills of Eagle in southwestern Idaho.

An underground fungus that grows near tree roots, truffles sell for hundreds to several thousand dollars a pound, depending on the variety.

At those prices, searching for them is kind of like mining for gold, says Paul Beckman, the father of truffles in Idaho.

“It’s like gold mining. It’s just fun,” said Beckman, who has planted several dozen acres of hazelnut and oak trees that

have been inoculated with truffle spores.

Unlike in many other places around the world, where people search for truffles in the wild, Idaho producers have planted thousands of acres of trees inoculated with truffle spores in orchard settings.

Beckman planted his first truffle trees near the Eagle foothills in 2006 and planted most of his trees in 2008. Trees typically take 8-12 years to start producing truffles and Beckman found his first truffles in 2012 and has been finding about 12 pounds a year since then.

Trained dogs are used to sniff out truffles, which grow underground, and the first truffle discovered in Idaho by Beckman

was eaten by the dog that found it. Now he uses trained truffle dogs and truffles being eaten by the dogs that find them is less of a problem.

The type of truffles Beckman has been finding are known as white Bianchetto truffles, which he has been selling for \$40 an ounce or \$640 a pound.

Brad Sprenger, a neighbor, planted his trees a few years after Beckman and this year found 18 black Perigord truffles, the first of that type found in Idaho and the second most expensive truffle at about \$1,000 to \$1,200 a pound.

Truffle farming is a lesson in patience “and a lot of weeding, watering and waiting,” Sprenger said.

He said finding nothing even after his trees were six or seven years old made him wonder, “Is it ever going to work? But the fact that we’ve actually moved from concept to reality is even more exciting.”

According to Beckman, about 20 people in southwestern Idaho have planted a total of about 150 acres of truffles and the region has what is believed to be the largest concentration of truffle orchards in the United States.

In Caldwell, vineyard and winery owner Ron Bitner has planted one acre of trees inoculated with Perigord truffle spores. Though he hasn’t found any yet, he said he’s “excited that the black truffle has been

found in Idaho.”

His trees are 8 years old and it takes about 8-12 years for trees to produce the black Perigord truffles, Bitner said. The vegetation around the trees has started to burn off from a chemical reaction that happens when truffles start to produce, he said.

“The dogs get excited and get down and start to dig but we haven’t found anything yet,” Bitner said. “I’m not discouraged at all, especially since Brad has found some.”

Truffles are prized for the rich aromas they emit and have been described by one writer as “sulfuric love bombs ... Eating, even sniffing, a truffle is a bit like being drugged.”

Beckman and Sprenger are promoting truffles as “Idaho’s other tuber,” a play on the state’s most famous crop, potatoes. Beckman dreams of a promotion campaign tying the two crops together.

“What I’d really like to see is truffles and tubers married up,” he said. “Potatoes with truffles on them is an incredibly nice meal.”

Sprenger said that when he and Beckman were trying to figure out the potential viability of the crop, they modeled on 30 pounds of truffles per acre each year.

When and if that happens, “We’ll cover the cost of the land, everything, in that first year,” he said. “It would be nice if it did generate some retirement income. If it doesn’t, fine, we had fun.”

Beckman has planted a few trees inoculated with white Alba truffle spores. Alba truffles are the mother of all truf-

fles and a two-pound Alba once sold at auction for \$300,000, though they typically fetch about \$2,500 to \$3,500 a pound.

Truffles have traditionally been found in the wild and trying to raise them in an orchard setting is a relatively new idea so there is no manual on raising truffles, Beckman said.

People who have planted truffles in Idaho are trying a wide variety of methods to try to unlock the secret to making the underground tubers grow, he said.

“We try everything,” Beckman said. “We’re all trying to learn exactly what the secret is.”

When he was first thinking of planting truffle trees, Beckman was told it was too cold here and not an ideal place to grow them. That turned out to not be true.

The Snake River moderates the climate in the area, Beckman said, and the soil pH content in the area is very high so growers

don’t have to add tons of lime to the soil like truffle farmers in other areas do.

“It’s turning out to be a pretty good climate for truffles,” he said. “We’re excited about it.”



Photo by Steve Ritter

Truffles found in orchards in Eagle, Idaho, are shown at Le Coq d’Or restaurant in Eagle. Truffles, which sell for several hundred to a few thousand dollars a pound, are starting to be found in southwestern Idaho orchards.



Photo by Steve Ritter

This orchard in the foothills of Eagle, Idaho, was planted with thousands of trees inoculated with truffle spores. Truffles are starting to be found in small amounts in this and some other orchards in southwestern Idaho.



Submitted photo

Work proceeds on a project to improve infrastructure at an Eastern Snake Plain Aquifer water recharge site in this Idaho Water Resource Board file photo.

Water board blows away aquifer recharge record

By Sean Ellis

Idaho Farm Bureau Federation

POCATELLO – The Idaho Water Resource Board has already blown away its record for managed recharge into the Eastern Snake Plain Aquifer with at least a month to go in the 2017-18 recharge season.

And the previous record, set last year, blew away the exist-

ing record at the time.

The ESPA, which covers 10,000 square miles in southern Idaho, provides irrigation water for more than two million acres of farm land.

The water board's managed recharge program seeks to reverse declining groundwater levels and spring flows within the ESPA, which is a critical resource for many of the state's

farmers and ranchers, as well as municipalities and businesses.

As of April 5, the board had recharged more than 419,000 acre-feet of water into the aquifer during the 2017-18 season, which began in August and could last well into May.

That's far more than the 317,000 acre-feet of managed recharge achieved during the 2016-17 season, which eclipsed by a wide margin the previous record at the time of 166,000 acre-feet set during the 2011-12 season.

During the 2014 and 2015 seasons, the program recharged 75,000 and 66,218 acre-feet, respectively.

Wesley Hipke, who runs the IWRB's managed aquifer recharge program, said there's a decent chance of hitting 500,000 acre-feet of recharge this season.

"We have a really good shot at

that, depending on the weather and a lot of factors, including irrigation demand," he said.

Helping maintain and improve water levels in the ESPA through managed recharge is particularly important to the region's farming industry, said IWRB Chairman Roger Chase.

"Our goal is to sustain the agriculture industry we have today and help it grow," he said. "It's such an important part of the state's overall economy and we had to make sure we took care of our agricultural community."

Since 2009, the state has had a managed aquifer recharge goal for the ESPA of 250,000 acre-feet per year. Last year was the first time that goal was achieved.

The large amount of water the program has been able to recharge into the aquifer the past two years is a result of last win-



Submitted photo

Water is recharged into the Eastern Snake Plain Aquifer in this Idaho Water Resource Board file photo. More than 419,000 acre-feet of water has been recharged into the ESPA so far this year, blowing away last year's record of 317,000 acre-feet.

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DUVALL

Continued from page 2

they're selling all their cows. "This is the best business decision," a member of the family said. However, "It's never been just a job to us; it's how we raise our family. Without our beloved cows, who in the world are we?" I think most of us in agriculture can relate to that, no matter what we grow or raise.

In March, I saw a news article about a farm in Vermont that auctioned off its cows and equipment. Turns out that farm was owned by my friend and Farm Bureau colleague, former Vermont Farm Bureau President Clark Hinsdale. According to the article, his was one of 12 dairy farms in that state to exit the dairy business just since January.

Clark's summation that the structure of dairy farming is changing—that smaller family operations cannot sustain themselves—is concerning. When the market eventually turns in a better direction, and it will, most of the small, family-operated dairies that have shut down will not come back. It is heartbreaking to watch as second-, third- and fourth-generation dairy farms call it quits. This will have an irreversible impact.

I grew up on my family's dairy farm. We got out of dairy farming years ago, during a previous bust, and switched to beef cattle and poultry production. But I'll always cherish the experiences and the work ethic that my brother and I learned from milking cows. I still think a Holstein is one of

the most impressive animals. It is sad to think of fewer opportunities for young people to grow up in dairy farming.

There is help on the way. With milk prices down and production costs up, the national dairy margin under USDA's Dairy Margin Protection Program in February 2018 fell to \$6.88 per hundredweight, the lowest level since June 2016. While that reflection of today's dairy industry is nothing to cheer about, a silver lining is the lower margin will trigger much-needed program payments to farmers. Also, Congress recently passed legislation to make the program work better, including monthly margin calculations instead of bimonthly, and providing catastrophic coverage at the \$5 margin level at no cost to producers. With those changes in place, USDA has opened the enrollment period for MPP coverage for 2018. It is hoped that more dairy farmers will sign up.

In addition, Farm Bureau has been working with USDA to develop a revenue insurance product, much like crop insurance, for dairy producers. Dairy farming is risky business. Producers need adequate risk management and Farm Bureau is excited about developing another tool to help them survive times like this. We look forward to being able to share more information about the program soon.

The old saying in dairy farming is the cure for low prices is low prices, meaning prices will go back up on the basis

of reduced supply as farms shut down or cull herds. That acceptance of the cyclical nature of dairying might be of some help to get through the downturns by focusing on the upswing to come. But the bust that dairy farmers are facing today seems worse and more prolonged. This doesn't feel like business as usual, even for dairy.

Many of us are necessarily focused on national policy solutions and global market trends. Those are important, but I will close by focusing on the people behind the policies and the data. The trait that I've found in just about every farmer I've ever known is that special spirit of brotherhood and sisterhood that abides in

agriculture—our unique understanding of what our fellow farmers and ranchers are going through, our mutual respect for the farming way of life, and our willingness to offer an ear and a prayer to those in the farming family who are struggling. If you are a dairy farmer trying to hold on, please talk with your friends and neighbors and let them be a source of emotional support. If you know a dairy farmer, offer him or her an act of kindness, even if it's a small favor or just an invitation to come over for supper and talk as friends. In times like this, little things can have a big impact.

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Tim Lowry
Idaho Farm Bureau file photo



Paul Nettleton
Idaho Farm Bureau file photo

Lawmakers encourage reimbursement of Owyhee County ranchers

By Sean Ellis

Idaho Farm Bureau Federation

BOISE – A proclamation passed by the Idaho Legislature encourages the state’s Constitutional Defense Council to help reimburse two Idaho ranchers for the legal costs involved in their landmark court victory that resulted in several precedent-setting water law rulings.

The Idaho Supreme Court in 2007 unanimously ruled in favor of the Owyhee County ranchers, Tim Lowry and Paul Nettleton, in their battle with the U.S. Bureau of Land Management over who owns in-stream stock watering rights on federally administered land.

Agreeing with the ranchers, the court ruled the BLM didn’t own the rights because it doesn’t own cattle and couldn’t put the water to beneficial use.

However, the court refused to grant the ranchers attorney fees and their ranches were each saddled with more than \$1 million in legal bills.

Since then, they have negotiated the amount they owe down to about \$300,000 each.

House Proclamation 1, which Idaho lawmakers overwhelmingly approved in March, asks that money from the Constitutional Defense Council Fund be used to help offset the ranchers’ legal fees.

During debate on the House floor, several lawmakers pointed out that the entire state has benefited from the ranchers’ court victory.

“They, on their own dime, perfected a public right for everyone,” said Idaho’s Speaker of the House, Rep. Scott Bedke, a Republican rancher from Oak-

ley.

During the state’s Snake River Basin Adjudication process, which decreed more than 158,000 water rights, southern Idaho ranchers and the BLM filed thousands of overlapping claims to in-stream stock watering rights on federal land.

All but two of the ranchers, Lowry and Nettleton, backed off or negotiated with the BLM when they realized fighting the federal agency in court would cost a lot of money.

The SRBA court ended up conveying 17,000 stock watering rights to the BLM.

During the past two legislative sessions, Idaho lawmakers have passed bills that codify the ranchers’ court victory into state law.

That means other ranchers won’t have to fight the same

battle and the legislation will allow southern Idaho ranchers who didn’t file claims to stock watering rights on federal land during the SRBA to file them now.

Bedke said the ranchers’ court victory changed the way stockwater rights are adjudicated in Idaho.

Before the ranchers’ victory, every stockwater right in Idaho that was conveyed went to the federal government. Since the victory, those rights have gone to ranchers with grazing permits on federal allotments.

“Every permittee in the state benefits for their having stood up,” Bedke said. The case “changed the way stockwater rights are adjudicated in the state of Idaho. It’s a big deal.”

The ruling has also benefited North Idaho ranchers. Dur-



ing the North Idaho Adjudication process, the U.S. Forest Service withdrew 36 claims to in-stream stockwater rights after the Idaho Department of Water Resources, as a result of the Idaho Supreme Court case, sent the Forest Service a letter requiring evidence the agency was putting the water to beneficial use.

“They’ve gone in debt at the risk of their ranches to protect the water rights of the state of Idaho,” Rep. John Vander Woude, R-Nampa, said before House lawmakers voted in favor of the proclamation. “I would encourage the Constitutional Defense Council to also vote in favor of it.”

Agreeing with Nettleton’s Joyce Livestock Co. and Lowry’s LU Ranching Co. on their main point that the government can’t hold federal rangeland water rights because it doesn’t own cattle, the Idaho Supreme Court said the BLM’s argument reflected a serious misunderstanding of water law.

However, the court denied the ranchers the ability to recover attorney fees under the Equal Access to Justice Act, which the court said doesn’t allow state courts to award attorney fees against the federal government when the United States appears in an adjudication under the McCarran Amendment’s waiver of sovereign immunity.

That left the ranchers with a court victory that benefits the entire state but also with legal costs that jeopardize their ranches, Rep. Megan Blanksma, R-Hammett, said during debate on the House floor.

“Through their lawsuit, Joyce

and LU ranches effected a public right that resulted in benefits to the entire state ... yet they continue to struggle with legal fees that were involved in their effort,” she said.

“This is the right way to encourage the righting of an injustice,” she said of the proclamation’s call to help reimburse the ranches.

The court victory didn’t just affect LU and Joyce ranches, it “affected every water holder in the state of Idaho,” said Rep. Christy Zito, R-Hammett. “These ranchers fought for the sovereignty of our state, not just for the survival of their ranches.”

The Constitutional Defense Council consists of the governor, attorney general, speaker of the house and president pro tempore of the senate.

According to state statute, the purpose of the council “includes, but is not limited to, restoring and advancing the sovereignty and authority over issues that affect this state and the well-being of its citizens.”

The proclamation states that payment of the ranchers’ attorney fees “would comport with the purpose of the Constitutional Defense Council and its use of funds in support of Idaho’s sovereignty and authority over stockwater rights on federal lands in the state of Idaho.”

During debate on the proclamation in the Senate, Sen. Jim Rice, R-Caldwell, said state statute gives the council broad authority to defend the rights of the state and its citizens. “The statute clearly is broad enough to give the Constitutional Defense Council the

discretion to reimburse” the ranchers, he said.

Nettleton and Lowry told Idaho Farm Bureau Federation that they welcome the proclamation but aren’t sure how the council will vote on the issue.

“We’re not holding our breaths but I’m glad that they sent that message and it’s definitely a moral victory,” Nettleton said.

Lowry said there was no debate among his family on whether to fight the court battle “because what was going on was completely wrong, as the supreme court validated. The BLM had absolutely no right to hold the water right. We decided that we had no other option than to stand and fight.”

At the federal level, Sen. Mike Crapo, R-Idaho, has introduced legislation in Congress three times that seeks to get the

ranchers reimbursed for their legal costs.

“Unfortunately, the low success rate for enacting private relief legislation and the ban on congressionally directed spending, such as earmarks, made it exceedingly difficult for Senator Crapo’s bill to advance in Congress,” said Lindsay Nothern, Crapo’s communications director.

“Clearly, the state of Idaho recognizes the efforts and sacrifices of Mr. Lowry and Mr. Nettleton, and it was encouraging to see the legislature debate this issue during its 2018 session,” he added. “Not only has it helped the ranching operations of Mr. Lowry and Mr. Nettleton, the legal victory yielded benefits to their ranching neighbors in Idaho and across the West as well.”



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County Farm Bureaus oppose Scotchman Peaks wilderness area proposal

By Sean Ellis

Idaho Farm Bureau Federation

SANDPOINT — County Farm Bureau presidents representing thousands of Idaho families have sent letters to Sen. Jim Risch, R-Idaho, opposing a proposed Scotchman Peaks Wilderness Area in North Idaho.

Risch in December 2016 introduced legislation in Congress that would set aside 13,960 acres in Bonner County as wilderness.

Bonner County residents will vote on the proposal during the May 15 primary election.

Risch has said the legislation won't move forward unless supported by county residents and that he introduced it to get a better sense of where people stood on the wilderness designation.

"The decision is not mine, it is yours," he stated in an opinion piece published April 11 in the Sandpoint Reader.

The proposed wilderness area is opposed by Bonner County Farm Bureau and BCFM President Fred Omodt sent Risch a letter pointing out that 65 percent of Idaho, and 60 percent of Bonner County, is owned by either federal or state agencies.

"By placing more land in the wilderness system in Idaho, additional acres are taken from an already limited land area available to support our economy," Omodt said in his letter.

He said the proposed wilderness area is literally in the back yards of many local residents who have used the resource for recreation, exploration and inspiration for generations.

"If it is classified as wilderness, many of the families who have enjoyed this area will be restricted from its use," Omodt said. "These families honor and revere the area and want to see it protected and managed. But they do not want it locked away."

During Idaho's May 15 primary election, Bonner County residents will be asked, "Do you favor Senator Jim Risch's proposal for congressional designation of a 13,960-acre Scotchman Peaks Wilderness area in Bonner County?"

Risch, in his opinion piece, said that while he did introduce the legislation in Congress, it was at the urging of many Idahoans and at the request of the Bonner County Commissioners and the Friends of Scotchman Peaks in order to measure community support for the proposal.

"I did not initiate this proposal and, more importantly, I will follow the decision made by you, the people of Bonner County," he said. "The decision is not mine, it is yours."

Idaho County Farm Bureau President Sheryl Nuxoll sent Risch a letter stating that ICFB members have grave concerns about the proposal.

She pointed out that Idaho ranks third in the nation in total

number of acres designated as wilderness. Almost 4.8 million acres of public land in Idaho are protected with a wilderness designation, which is the highest form of preservation of the nation's public lands.

Lands with a wilderness designation are off limits to mining and timber harvest and are also closed to motorized and mechanical vehicles.

"By placing more land into wilderness, our local people are deprived of already very limited land area available to support our declining forest, agricultural and mining economy," Nuxoll stated.

The proposal would lock up the

land as wilderness forever.

As harvest methods become more economically viable, less intrusive and environmentally sound, "those proposed wilderness areas will become more important for society," Nuxoll said. "Locking up potential solutions for future needs is shortsighted."

According to Friends of Scotchman Peaks, which supports the wilderness designation, it would not close any areas currently open to timber harvest, motorized recreation or mountain biking and it would not close any existing roads, motorized trails or snowmobiling areas.



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Idaho Farm Bureau file photo

Potatoes are harvested in a field in this Idaho Farm Bureau file photo. Idaho producers are responding to 2017 Census of Agriculture surveys at one of the highest rates in the nation and the state is No. 1 when it comes to the percentage of farmers and ranchers who have responded to those surveys online.

Idaho farmers among top in responses to 2017 Census of Agriculture survey

By Sean Ellis

Idaho Farm Bureau Federation

POCATELLO – Idaho farmers and ranchers rank No.4 in the nation when it comes to responding to 2017 Census of Agriculture surveys.

And they lead the nation when it comes to the percentage of producers who have responded to those surveys online.

The census, taken every five years, is a complete count of every farm and ranch in the nation that produces or normally would produce at least \$1,000 worth of agricultural products during the census year.

USDA's National Agricultural

Statistics Service began collecting data for the census last year.

As of April 18, Idaho ranks fourth in the nation when it comes to the percentage of producers in the state who have returned the surveys, with a 65.11 percent response rate, behind only Iowa and Illinois, which are tied at 66.56 percent, and Alaska (65.38 percent), Chris Mertz, director of NASS' Northwest regional field office, told Idaho Farm Bureau Federation March 30.

The U.S. average response rate is 57.1 percent.

Mertz said it's important to respond to the census because a

lot of state and federal funds are allocated to the agricultural industry based on the data provided by the census, and that data is also used to help shape farm programs and policies.

He said he was pleased but not surprised by Idaho's high response rate.

"Those involved with agriculture in Idaho understand how important agriculture is to the state and local communities," Mertz said. "By returning their census questionnaires at the current levels, they are ensuring their industry will be adequately counted and represented when data are being used to promote and defend Idaho agriculture. Better data leads to

better decisions."

When it comes to use of the internet to respond to the surveys, Idaho leads the nation at 22.24 percent. The U.S. average is 13.49 percent.

Mertz said there is still time to get the questionnaires returned and NASS will be contacting producers about the census into June.

The census contains a wide variety of farm production and demographic characteristics for every county in the nation. USDA began collecting data for the new census in 2017 and will analyze and compile the data in 2018 and release it in February 2019.

SEARLE

Continued from page 2

Trade is not only important to the state's farming sector but Idaho's overall economy. According to a University of Idaho report, agriculture is the state's top economic sector and is responsible for 16 percent of Idaho's total Gross Domestic Product.

According to the report, agriculture is also directly and indirectly responsible for 128,000 Idaho jobs and about \$28 billion in sales annually.

On the national level, one in three farm acres is planted for export and \$325 of the value of each steer sold in the United States can be attributed to exports. Roughly 30 percent of total U.S. farm income comes directly from foreign exports.

Whether it's working on an agreement to avoid the proposed

tariffs on agricultural products by both the United States and China, re-negotiating the North American Free Trade Agreement, or any other trade issue, this nation's leaders have to make sure they get it right.

Rest assured, American Farm Bureau Federation staff are working day and night on all the various trade issues this country is currently facing and AFBF is making sure the collective voice of American producers has a seat at the table when these discussions are taking place.

While the current trade issues are a concern to American agriculture, Farm Bureau is also hopeful that positive benefits can arise from addressing these issues.

Free trade agreements have a proven track record of boosting revenue for American agricul-

ture by creating a level playing field for farmers and ranchers in foreign markets.

For example, since NAFTA was implemented in 1994, farm exports from the United States to Canada and Mexico have increased from \$8.9 billion in 1993 to \$38 billion in 2016.

This nation's farmers and ranchers export more than 20 percent of their production and free trade plays a big role in enabling them to earn their living.

As our nation's leaders negotiate and re-negotiate trade deals, they should keep in mind that agriculture has been one of the few bright spots in our country's overall trade balance.

Any gains in agricultural trade must be maintained while our trade representatives work to remove remaining barriers to trade.

They must also be careful to defuse any potential situations that could result in a trade war that could have far-reaching consequences for the nation's producers.

Any potential retaliatory tariffs or trade war would come at a time when America's agricultural sector could ill afford it. The USDA estimates net U.S. farm income will fall by 6.7 percent to \$59.5 billion in 2018. If realized, it would be the fifth straight year America's farmers and ranchers have collectively seen their farm incomes decrease.

Again, while the stakes are high for agriculture, Farm Bureau is hopeful the current trade discussions will result in an even fairer and more level playing field for America's farmers and ranchers.

KELLER

Continued from page 2

Whether it is serving on the soil and water district, helping with 4-H weekly, participating with the county planning and zoning commission, coaching a community softball team, or serving on the numerous commodity commissions or advisory groups, farmers and ranchers return to their industry by faithful service.

"The greatest phenomena of our American Republic are our voluntary organizations," says one of America's leading industrialists. "They represent the genius of Americans for achieving by working together."

The great voluntary groups,

like Farm Bureau, perform functions so important and so unique to this country that they are an inseparable portion of the American way of living. Their greatest contribution is in solving problems—community, state and national problems— not by appeal to government, but by group thinking and united action.

Reducing highway fatalities, building a community hospital, playground or recreation center, securing better schools or roads, promoting trade between countries or peace in the world – all of these things, and many more, are the constructive jobs which citizens all over America

unite in voluntary groups to accomplish.

The agricultural volunteers do most of their work without recourse to government. They meet problems themselves. There is scarcely a community which does not profit by the hard work and wisdom of citizens who band together to achieve something of value for their neighborhood, their state, or their county.


Elizabeth Andrews, an international voluntary leader with Habitat for Humanity, described many of the volunteers within organizations like Farm Bureau and agriculture when she stated: "Volunteers do not necessarily have the time; they

just have the heart."

We are extremely grateful for the many, many individuals who volunteer their time and efforts within Farm Bureau on a very regular basis. Just in Idaho alone, there are several thousand Farm Bureau volunteers. Some give a little and others more, but all is appreciated and applauded.

More than 2,300 years ago, Greek philosopher Aristotle summed up volunteerism: "What is the essence of life? To serve others and to do good."

Thank you, Farm Bureau volunteers. Thank you for your time and your hearts.



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Idaho governor candidates respond to Farm Bureau questions



Brad Little



Raul Labrador



Tommy Ahlquist

Idaho Farm Bureau Federation asked the three leading Republican gubernatorial candidates five questions that Farm Bureau believes are important to its members.

Following are the responses from Lt. Gov. Brad Little, Rep. Raul Labrador and Dr. Tommy Ahlquist.

Q: What is the purpose of government and your role as governor?

Little: The proper role of government is to provide an environment where business can thrive and families can prosper. State government can help provide infrastructure and a solid workforce, but then must get out of the way and allow the free enterprise system to work.

On a typical day, a governor makes several decisions that affect Idahoans now and into the future. You need a governor who instinctively understands Idaho and knows the interests of rural communities. Making Idaho the destination of choice for our children and grandchildren is the lens by which I will look at every decision as governor.

Labrador: Government should create an environment where businesses and citizens thrive, provide essential services to citizens, be good stewards of taxpayers' money, treat all constituents equally and

with transparency and reduce the regulatory burden on citizens.

As governor, my role is to provide and execute a vision for a stronger and more prosperous Idaho. I uniquely can rely on my Idaho Statehouse and national experience as U.S. congressman to implement my vision. Most importantly, Idahoans know what to expect from me: I have a proven, consistent, conservative record, have taken on special interests and made tough decisions.

Ahlquist: The purpose of government is to serve the people of Idaho in the limited and enumerated roles outlined in the Idaho and U.S. constitutions. I believe the limited role of government is to get the heck out of our way.

When government does have a role, it should work as hard as the people of Idaho and we should demand the same level of excellence as we do from ourselves. The governor is the CEO of the state and should provide statewide vision and leadership. The governor should also to execute the laws of our state and fight for Idahoans.

Q: Are you satisfied with the current size and scope of state government? If not, how would you change it?

Ahlquist: No. Government shouldn't grow faster than our citizens' paychecks. I have a plan to reform Idaho's cap on government spending, that will put in place an actual cap that prohibits government spending from growing faster than personal income growth. This is an important additional side board to our balanced budget requirement that will safeguard against out of control government spending.

A fresh look and full evaluation of how we spend each of our taxpayer dollars is equally important. We must eliminate wasteful government spending and ensure that we are bringing efficiencies to state government that invest our tax dollars effectively.

Labrador: I am not satisfied! Making government more accountable, transparent and efficient are essential ingredients in my vision for a stronger, more prosperous Idaho. As governor, I will get government out of the way; government regulations have muffled the creativity and potential of our citizens, higher tax rates have limited economic development, federal mandates have crippled education and healthcare in Idaho and politicians in power have passed out too many favors to the well-connected. I want to unleash Idaho's potential by reducing regulatory burdens, lowering taxes, fighting to eliminate federal

mandates and to provide equal opportunity and transparency for all Idahoans.

Little: Like on our family farms and ranches, state government must be focused on the drivers of spending and make necessary cuts in order to be prepared when times get tough. I believe Idaho is a model for fiscally responsible government. As a conservative, we cannot rest on our laurels. Although the legislature and the governor delivered tax relief this year for families and businesses, set aside more revenue in our rainy day funds, and invested more to improve education, there is still more to do to ensure we have a pro-growth climate here in Idaho.

Q: As the head of all state agencies, what would be your regulatory approach?

Labrador: President Trump wants to “drain the swamp” federally and I firmly believe Idaho has a swamp of its own. I believe Idaho suffers from crony capitalism, that Idaho’s government is picking winners and losers and that special interest groups are benefiting unfairly from Idahoans’ tax dollars. We need to restore citizens to their rightful place; government should serve them, not the other way around. Under the “Why I’m Running” section of www.RaulLabrador.com, I summarize my position this way: “We need a leader who will hold people accountable, make government more efficient, more transparent, and fully open for citizen review.”

Little: My mantra with regulation is, we must ensure only the lightest possible hand of government in the day-to-day lives of our citizens and businesses. As governor, I will require all agencies to put together regulatory impact statements, much like fiscal impact statements, to determine the impacts of rules on families and businesses. Last year, I issued the Idaho Freedom Licensing Act that reviews all professional licensure, with the aim of reducing burdens on Idahoans seeking to make a living. As governor, I will bring a healthy skepticism of regulation and aim to reduce burdens on Idahoans.

Ahlquist: As an emergency room doctor for 18 years, the first line of the Hippocratic

oath is to first do no harm. My regulatory approach will be to follow those words and get government out of the way of our families and businesses. As a small businessman, I’ve dealt with ridiculous government regulations first-hand and I know that over-regulation harms business. I’ll fight to remove burdensome regulations facing all areas and appoint people in my administration who come from the industries they are regulating. I think we should be following President Trump’s example of rolling back multiple regulations for every new one.

Q: Do you support Idaho taking over management of our federally administered lands?

Ahlquist: Yes, study after study shows that Idahoans are better stewards of our lands and that we know how to take better care of our lands than bureaucrats in D.C. The principle I always follow is the closer the giver is to the receiver, the better. With Idaho managing our lands, we can ensure first and foremost public access and multiple use of lands for grazing, timber harvest, mining, and recreation. As with most things, Idaho will always do a better job than the federal government.

Little: I have a long history, as a cattle and sheep industry leader, of working on these public lands issues. I was a sage brush rebel in the late 1970s. I sued the Clinton Administration over its top-down Roadless Rule in 2000, halting implementation and allowing Idaho to draft its own state Roadless Rule in 2006.

Local communities across Idaho, those folks on the ground, must have more say in day-to-day management, and I would pursue every option to get more control over management of our federal lands.

Labrador: Sixty-five percent of Idaho’s land is owned by the federal government (38 percent is national forest). In 2012 and 2015, I was lead sponsor of the Self-Sufficient Community Lands Act “that will allow state and local management of federally-owned forests and improve forest health, boost local economies and save taxpayers money.” In 2015 I stated: “We in Idaho know local managers will be better stewards of the 193 million acres in the

national forest system.”

In 2011, I introduced the “Idaho Land Sovereignty Act” to protect ranchers (livestock grazing), tourism and motorized recreation in Idaho from federal overreach in monument designation.

Q: Would you support the construction of additional dams in Idaho? If so, what specifically would you do as governor to ensure results?

Little: I’m excited about the headway we have been making on [aquifer] recharge, but we must do more. The need for stored water, both surface water and groundwater, is essential. Idaho’s future is dependent on it. With our dynamic economy, we need to ensure we have the water infrastructure for existing industries, while also accommodating future economic growth across Idaho.

Any new dam project would require significant investments from the public and private sectors. As governor, I will bring people to the table, and lead a coalition that determines where we need additional storage and develop a plan for getting it done.

Labrador: I believe the construction of new dams in Idaho should be based on the economic needs of the state to take into account the agricultural community, flood control, electricity, transportation, and environmental concerns. Capital investments of this size require all stakeholders to work together collaboratively, including local, state, and federal. I would be involved in ensuring these stakeholders work together in a way that benefits consumers and taxpayers.

Ahlquist: Yes, absolutely. More storage options are critical to keeping our Idaho water right here in Idaho where it belongs. It is time for less talk and studies and more action to make this happen. I will work closely with our federal delegation, all the key stakeholders and industry experts to find ways to aggressively pursue more storage options. I will also work closely with the agricultural community to ensure recharge efforts continue and water rights are protected. I will fight to protect Idaho’s water for farmers, ranchers and dairymen and make sure Idaho maintains sovereignty over its water.



Photo by Steve Ritter

Idaho lawmakers in March passed a bill that strengthens Idaho's trespassing laws and makes them easier for the public and landowners to understand.

Bill strengthens, clarifies Idaho's trespassing laws

By Sean Ellis

Idaho Farm Bureau Federation

This past legislative session, Idaho lawmakers overwhelmingly passed a bill that clarifies, simplifies and strengthens the state's trespassing laws.

Contrary to claims by some of the bill's opponents, it does not criminalize innocent behavior and will not result in Girl Scouts, missionaries and door-to-door salesman becoming criminals.

In order for someone to be convicted of a criminal trespass under the new law, they must know or have reason to know they were trespassing.

What the legislation will actually do is protect private property rights, which are one of the fundamental rights essential to the preservation of individual freedom, and the new law adds more clarity to the state's

trespassing laws, which were previously spread throughout Idaho code and were confusing and inconsistent.

It balances the rights of landowners and the rights of the public and is a solid improvement upon the state's previous trespassing laws.

It should also improve relations between property owners and hunters, fishers and other outdoorsmen by simplifying and consolidating those previously dispersed trespassing codes so they are more easily found and understood by both parties.

While House Bill 658, which goes into effect July 1, did face some significant criticism, that opposition was based on a fundamental misunderstanding of the current law and the legislation. It should be noted that lawmakers approved it by a combined 80-24 vote.

They made their decision after

hearing from dozens of property owners, including many farmers and ranchers, who traveled to the Statehouse to describe the damage caused to their property by a small percentage of people who willfully trespass on their property.

They provided examples of how trespassers have continually driven through freshly planted fields, destroyed expensive farming equipment, cut down fences, used corrals for firewood or harassed and even shot their livestock.

The problem with the state's existing trespassing laws, they said, was that they had no teeth and were confusing and thus hard to enforce.

Under Idaho's previous trespassing codes, someone guilty of criminal trespassing faced a \$50 fine, if convicted. That was hardly enough to deter trespassers or give prosecutors reason to pursue a conviction.

Under the new statute, someone guilty of criminal trespass faces a minimum \$300 fine for a first conviction, \$1,500 for a second conviction and \$5,000 for a third conviction. Someone with a third conviction could face a felony charge if there is more than \$1,000 worth of damage involved with the trespass.

Not only is this felony provision harmonious with current law when it comes to malicious damage to property, it is completely reasonable.

There should be a strong penalty for someone who knowingly and willfully trespasses on someone else's property three times and causes more than \$1,000 worth of damage while doing it.

And remember, someone can only be convicted under this law if they knowingly and

See TRESPASS p. 40

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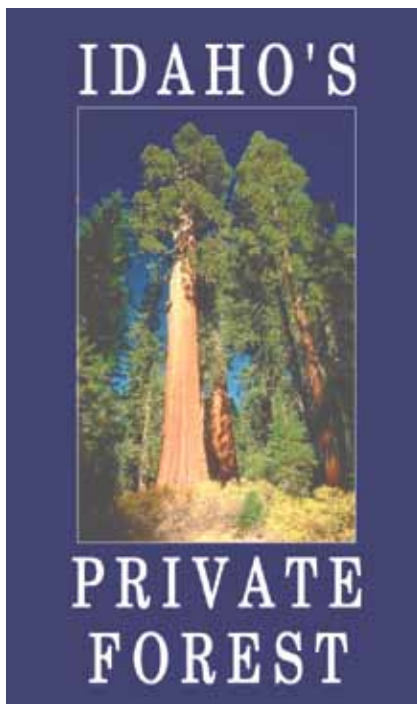
Good at most northwest stores



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Boise	1305 Broadway
Caldwell	916 Cleveland
Eagle	127 East State St.
Meridian	307 East Fairview Ave.
Nampa	816 3rd Street South
Twin Falls	1280 East Filer
Ontario, Oregon	94 West Idaho Ave



First steps for new Idaho forest owners



Photo by Chris Schnepf

By Chris Schnepf

In 2016, 28 percent of surveyed Idaho forest owners indicated they were likely or very likely to sell or give away a portion of their forest land within the next five years. If you are a new forest owner, or know someone who is or will be, here is a checklist of things to consider doing in the first year of forest ownership.

Check your property tax classification. Idaho has different tax rates for different land uses. Forest use is taxed at a relatively low rate, similar to agricultural use, to support timber production from those lands.

There are two possible categories. In category 6 (productivity), forest land is taxed at a set rate every year. In category 7 (bare land and yield), forest land is taxed at a lower annual rate, but when timber is harvested, there is a 3 percent yield tax on the stumpage value. Different counties have varied procedures for documenting the landowners' intent to manage for wood products, but many counties require a written management plan that is either developed or approved by a professional forester. For more information, contact your county assessor's office or check the Idaho State Tax Commission's website at <https://tax.idaho.gov/index.cfm> and type "forest" into the search engine.

Most Idaho family forests will benefit from reduced density.

Get more education. University of Idaho Extension offers a whole variety of educational activities, publications, and videos to help landowners manage their forest to meet their goals. For more information, go to <http://www.uidaho.edu/extension/forestry>. You can also learn a lot about forestry through your forest-owning peers. One of the best ways of doing that is through the Idaho Forest Owners Association (<http://www.idahoforestowners.org>).

Membership in IFOA also gets you a sub-

scription to Northwest Woodlands, a 20- to 30-page quarterly publication of the Idaho, Oregon, and Washington forest owner associations, with many articles by regional experts and forestry education specialists.

Learn to identify Idaho trees. Idaho is blessed with a wide variety of tree species, especially as you go further north in the state. Being able to identify tree species is a fundamental first step toward making forest management decisions that reflect your objectives. Many good local

tree identification handouts are available. There are also some excellent color field guides. One of the best is titled *Plants and Trees of Southern Interior British Columbia and the Inland Northwest* (Lone Pine Publishing), which will help you identify trees and a variety of understory plants, shrubs, mosses, and lichens.

Reduce stocking. Idaho family forests are commonly overstocked, or put differently, trees are too close to each other. Moisture is usually the most limiting factor to tree growth in Idaho. Overstocking accentuates moisture stress, which predisposes trees to attack by forest insects. Spacing needs vary from 12-15 feet of space between sapling trees, to over 40 feet between trees with stems over 24 inches in diameter, especially on drier sites. Leaving the tallest, best-formed trees and cutting the shorter or poorer-formed trees (e.g., conifers with forked tops) will leave the most resilient forest. For more information, see a UI Extension publication titled

Logging Selectively (PNW 534). We also offer field days on thinning and pruning — the next one will be held June 3 in Bonners Ferry.

Favor pines and larch over firs. Grand fir and Douglas-fir are good trees, but on many sites, we have much higher proportions of them than we ever had historically, due to a century of fire exclusion and partial cutting practices. This means more problems with root disease and insects that focus on these two species. If Douglas-fir or grand fir are the most shade tolerant tree you see in the understory, favoring ponderosa pine will result in fewer insect and disease issues on the site. If you have cedar or hemlock on the site, then western larch and western white pine are some of the most sustainable species to favor on the site over the long term. We are not talking about going on a search and destroy mission for firs; rather, we are talking about favoring pines and larch for long-term sustainability.



Photo by Chris Schnepf

Keeping road drainage open protects the road and reduces sediment to streams.

Clean road drainage structures. Forest roads act as a drainage network. If that network is plugged, sediment may be sent to streams, where it can degrade fish habitat. Inadequate drainage can also lead to road failure, which is very costly to repair. It is important to check culverts and similar road drainage devices to make sure they are functioning properly. To download a publication or stream a video on these topics, go to <https://www.uidaho.edu/extension/idahoforestrybmps/>.

Prune young white pine. If you are lucky enough to have young white pine on your property, consider pruning them. White pine are very vulnerable to a non-native disease called white pine blister rust. Pruning white

pine up 10 feet (no more than half the tree's height at any one time) can reduce blister rust mortality by half. For more information, see a UI Extension publication titled *Pruning Western White Pine* (PNW 584). See <https://www.cals.uidaho.edu/edcomm/pdf/PNW/PNW0584.pdf>.

Prepare for fire. If you live on your property, remember that fires are a natural part of Idaho forest ecology. Forest homeowners should prepare for fire the same way people in Oklahoma should prepare for tornadoes. For more information, see *Protecting and Landscaping Homes in the Wildland/Urban Interface* (UI Bull 67)

See *FORESTRY* p. 27



Photo by Chris Schnepf

University of Idaho Extension offers many educational opportunities for new forest owners.



Submitted photo

A vineyard in southwestern Idaho is shown in this Idaho Wine Commission file photo. Idaho's 2018 wine grape crop should be much larger than the 2017 crop, which was reduced by a severe cold snap.

Wine grape crop should be bigger in 2018

By Sean Ellis

Idaho Farm Bureau Federation

CALDWELL — The size of Idaho's 2018 wine grape crop should be markedly bigger than the 2017 crop, according to vintners and vineyard owners.

"We're not across the line yet but it's looking good so far and this year certainly should be better than 2017," said Dale Jeffers, manager of Skyline Vineyards, which harvested only a small portion of its normal wine grape crop last year.

The state's 2017 wine grape crop was significantly impacted by a severe January cold snap that reduced tonnage by more than 90 percent in some vineyards.

Vineyard owners in southwestern Idaho, where the bulk of

Idaho's wine grapes are produced, said low temperatures reached minus 20-27 degrees for several days in January 2017.

They reported massive reductions in overall tonnage as a result. But the 2018 winter was relatively mild and this year's crop should be much better, they said.

Winemaker and vineyard owner Ron Bitner, who only harvested about 50 percent of his normal crop last year, is pruning right now and said that so far, his vines look good and he's expecting a far different result in 2018.

"We never know for sure until we drink that vintage, but this year looks to be a lot better than last year," he said.

Michael Williamson, co-owner

and manager of Williamson Orchards and Vineyards, said it's hard to be worse than last year. His operation experienced a massive reduction in its normal wine grape harvest in 2017.

"I'm pretty optimistic about this year," he said. "The plant wood I've been looking at is all the right color."

Winemaker Martin Fujishin said he would take even an average year over last year.

"The way it looks now, barring any major weather disasters, 2018 will be a lot better year," he said. "This year looks like it's going to be a pretty good year overall, so far."

The damage caused by last year's January cold snap was extreme, for both wine and table grapes, said University of Idaho researcher Essie Fallahi,

who manages UI's fruit program in Parma.

He agreed with Williamson that it won't be difficult to improve on last year's tonnage.

"Last year the crop was zero in some places and anything is better than zero," he said. "For both wine and table grapes, we are expecting a better crop this year."

But, he added, many vineyard owners cut their vines down to the ground or snow line last year, so while this winter was much milder, those people are dealing with younger vines that won't produce as much as a more mature vine, he said.

"The production will be there but it will not be as high as a normal year," he said of those vines that were cut.

United Dairymen of Idaho becomes Dairy West

By Sean Ellis

Idaho Farm Bureau Federation

BOISE — The potential market reach of Idaho's dairy industry has been greatly expanded with the formation of Dairy West.

Dairy West, created last year, is a non-profit organization that will continue the work of United Dairymen of Idaho, which promotes and markets the state's dairy industry and represents its 490 family owned dairy operations.

The group is funded through a producer assessment equal to 15 cents per every hundred pounds of milk produced.

UDI became a partner of Dairy West one year ago and on April 9, the Dairy Council of Utah/Nevada also became a partner. This will allow Dairy West the ability to tap into the Utah market, which has 3.1 million people, and segments of the Nevada market.

Idaho's population is 1.7 million and the state's dairy operations produce 15 billion pounds of milk annually while Utah and Nevada produces only a fraction of that.

The milk assessment, or "checkoff," that Idaho's dairy farm families pay to fund UDI have provided that organization with a large amount of resources, while the Utah council had relatively few resources.

"So, through this collaboration, we have the ability to meet the potential demand in this greater regional effort," said Cindy Miller, Dairy West's communications director.

Dairy West marries up the two states' resources and provides a broader marketing and promotional opportunity, which is good for the collective dairy industry, she said.

"What if we move the needle even slightly on yogurt consumption in schools, or milk consumption?" Miller said. "That would be significant."

While Utah is the first state outside of Idaho to join Dairy West, the potential is there for other states to join forces as well.

"This allows us to go outside of our state boundary to promote our products in other states," said Buhl dairyman John Brubaker, a member of the Dairy West board of directors. "We're excited about being able to reach other population bases."

Idaho's dairy industry has plenty of funding to work with "but we don't have the population base to work with," said Gooding dairyman Steve Ballard, vice-chairman of Dairy West's board and chairman of Idaho Farm Bureau Federation's dairy committee. "Dairy West gives us the opportunity to invest some money where the population is in the West. It gives us access to more population centers."

UDI is a quasi-state agency and didn't have the flexibility to partner with other entities outside Idaho, said Dairy West CEO Karianne Fallow.

"Dairy West gives us a lot more flexibility to be able to work outside the borders of Idaho," she said.



For now, Dairy West and UDI are being co-branded as the same entity to give consumers time to realize that the same programs and promotion work UDI conducted will continue, just under the Dairy West umbrella, Fallow said.

"This affords us new opportunities. The potential is huge," Fallow said. "Farmers, consumers, schools, teachers will continue to see the same great quality programs that UDI has always had, we just now have the opportunity to employ those in a wider geography."

The Dairy Council of Utah/Nevada will also be co-branded with Dairy West.

Idaho milk flows across borders every day "and following that milk to market and making sure there is demand and consumption happening was a huge motivating factor in forming Dairy West," Fallow said.

She said increasing regional demand for milk has the potential to have a positive economic impact for dairy operations, which is no small thing for Idaho agriculture and the state's economy.

Revenue from Idaho milk sales accounts for about 30 percent of the state's total farm-gate revenue.

According to a University of Idaho study, the state's dairy industry directly and indirectly is responsible for about \$10 billion in economic output, 39,000 jobs and \$160 million in state and local taxes.

Brubaker said there is still some confusion among consumers about what Dairy West is but that's quickly becoming less of a challenge.

"I don't get near as many questions as I used to," he said. "I think we're getting the message out pretty good."

Idaho's dairy industry, on the other hand, has known about the plans to form Dairy West for several years.

Fallow said a lot of outreach and conversations were held with dairy operators, processors and other stakeholders before the group was launched.

"This effort has been a long time in the making," she said. "I believe we did a pretty good job at keeping our stakeholders informed."

Brubaker said a lot of what he calls "kitchen table conversations" were held with dairymen while the concept was being discussed.

"From processors to dairymen, we had overwhelming support for it," he said.

Art Winners 2019

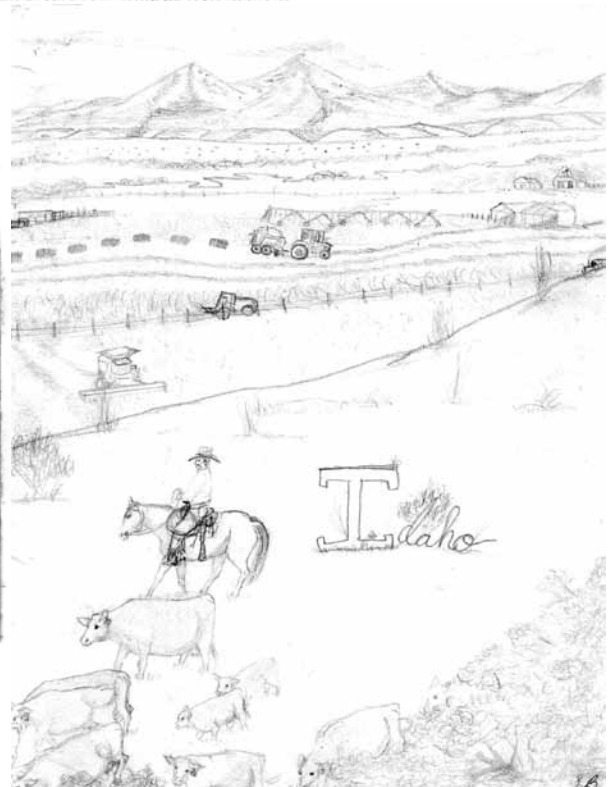


1st Sheridyn Sharp - Rexburg, ID

The Art Design Contest began in 2000 in an effort to promote the arts and further the understanding of agriculture in our lives. Targeted at grades 6-8, only original designs are accepted.

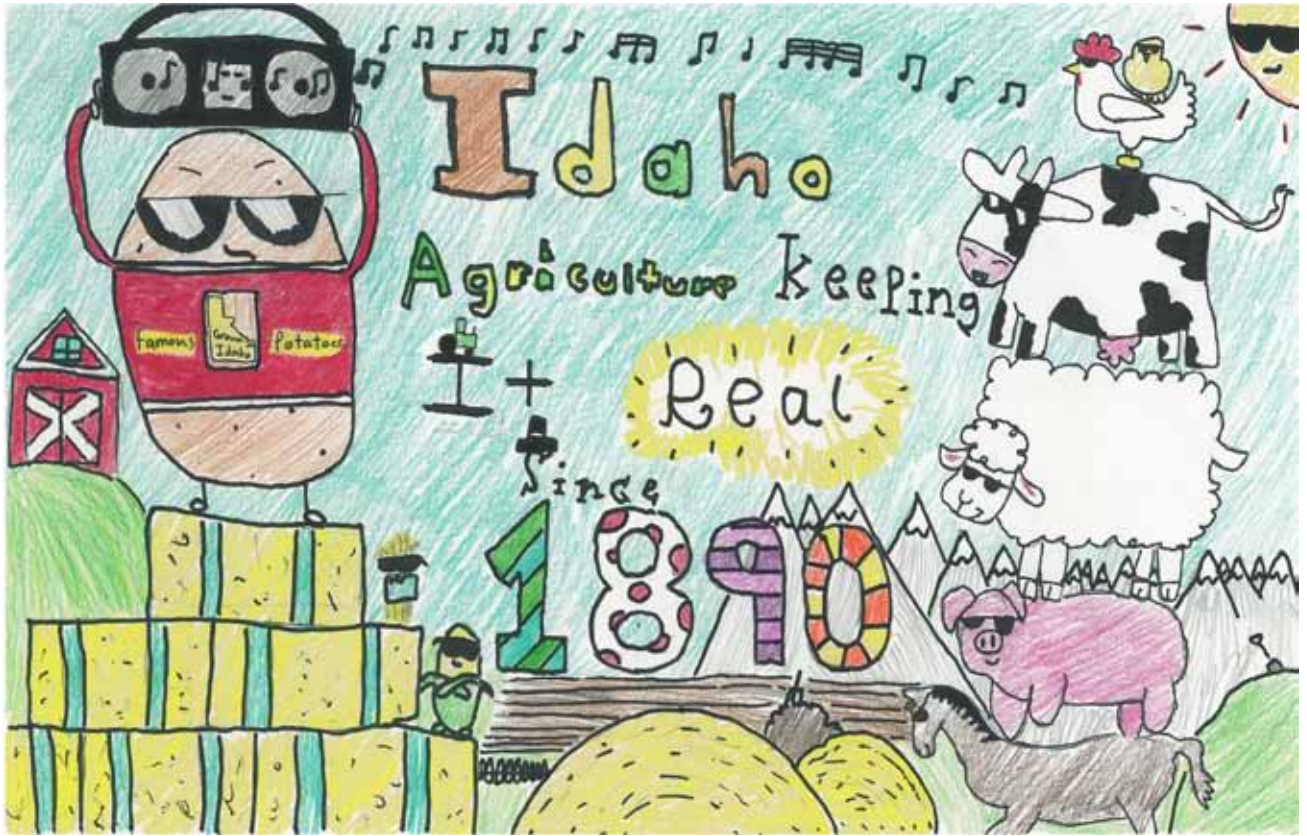


2nd McCoy Weekes - Rexburg, ID

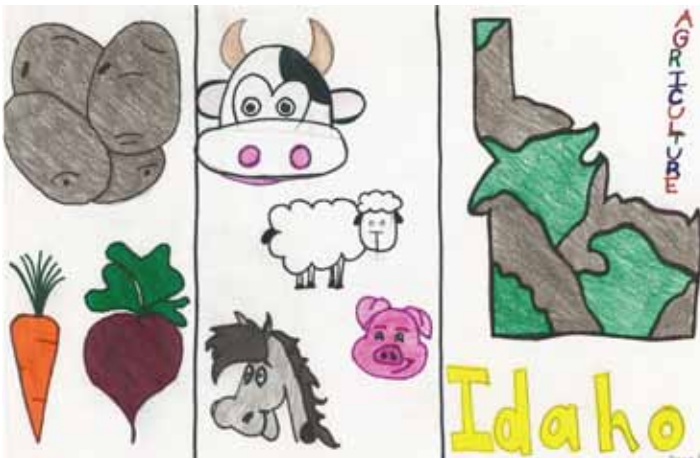


3rd Lacey Bullock - McCammon, ID

Poster Contest Winners



1st Titan Harrison - Blackfoot, ID



2nd Reese Baldwin - Blackfoot, ID



3rd Lila Cude - Ashton, ID

Color Contest Winners

Kindergarten & 1st Grade



1st Josephine Kohtz - Twin Falls, ID



2nd Kashton Hutchings - Blackfoot, ID



3rd Daphne R - Rexburg, ID

2nd & 3rd Grade



1st Lucy Long - Rigby, ID



2nd Serena Flaig - Sugar City, ID



3rd Mauriana Saiz - Chubbuck, ID

WORD SEARCH: TRUFFLES

C	B	D	K	U	F	R	T	R	E	S	E	D	L	I
V	O	L	F	W	S	N	A	C	E	P	G	F	O	T
B	U	R	G	U	N	D	Y	M	D	O	G	R	H	A
M	I	D	E	A	S	T	E	R	N	N	E	E	P	L
W	R	T	Y	G	P	N	T	M	F	G	K	N	O	I
S	C	G	L	K	O	T	M	U	O	Y	B	C	I	A
Q	L	D	K	F	R	N	P	N	S	M	N	H	L	N
U	F	R	E	N	C	H	B	L	A	C	K	K	P	W
I	I	W	Q	H	P	L	R	R	R	L	A	T	Q	H
S	R	Y	T	B	A	N	I	M	O	E	P	N	J	I
H	M	D	L	C	R	E	T	N	I	W	M	N	S	T
Y	W	N	K	M	Q	K	T	R	S	Y	N	M	D	E
P	M	C	A	R	T	I	L	A	G	I	N	O	U	S
N	C	H	I	N	E	S	E	C	Q	N	L	P	N	S
I	T	A	L	I	A	N	T	R	U	F	F	L	E	S

By Origin/Season

Winter
Burgundy
Summer
Italian Truffles
French
Mid-Eastern

Gourmet edibles

Oregon Brown
Oregon Black
French Black
Italian White
Tuscan
Pecan
Chinese
Desert

Texture

Firm
Brittle
Squishy
Spongy
Cartilaginous

ANSWERS ON PAGE 29



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Amount	Rate/Yield	Term in Months							
		1 to 3*	4 to 5*	6 to 11*	12 to 23*	24 to 35*	36 to 47*	48 to 60*	
\$ 50 - \$ 999	Rate	.600	.700	.800	.900	1.20	1.50	1.80	
	Yield	.600	.700	.800	.900	1.21	1.51	1.81	
\$ 1,000 - \$ 2,499	Rate	.650	.750	.850	.950	1.25	1.55	1.85	
	Yield	.650	.750	.850	.950	1.26	1.56	1.86	
\$ 2,500 - \$ 4,999	Rate	.700	.800	.900	1.00	1.30	1.60	1.90	
	Yield	.700	.800	.900	1.00	1.31	1.61	1.91	
\$ 5,000 - \$ 9,999	Rate	.750	.850	.950	1.05	1.35	1.65	1.95	
	Yield	.750	.850	.950	1.05	1.36	1.66	1.96	
\$ 10,000 - \$ 24,999	Rate	.800	.900	1.00	1.10	1.40	1.70	2.00	
	Yield	.800	.900	1.00	1.10	1.41	1.71	2.02	
\$ 25,000 - \$ 49,999	Rate	.850	.950	1.05	1.15	1.45	1.75	2.05	
	Yield	.850	.950	1.05	1.15	1.46	1.76	2.07	
\$ 50,000 - \$ 99,999	Rate	.900	1.00	1.10	1.20	1.50	1.80	2.10	
	Yield	.900	1.00	1.10	1.21	1.51	1.81	2.12	
\$ 100,000 +	Call	Call	Call	Call	Call	Call	Call	Call	

*Terms in months. Yield assumes that interest is compounded quarterly and is left in the account for a full year. Call for rates on amounts over \$100,000.00.

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Step 3: If this price is lower than what you currently pay, then The Canadian Pharmacy will help you get your prescription at the discounted price.



INSURANCE MATTERS

MIKE MYERS — *Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Co. of Idaho*

Protecting your world with a holistic approach to insurance

Unlike some insurance companies that sell generalized insurance products to everyone and market themselves solely on the basis of low prices and quick quotes, Farm Bureau Mutual Insurance Company of Idaho agents build a customized plan for you.

Farm Bureau's holistic approach to insurance – called the “Your World” Risk Management Concept – helps our agents more easily identify risks and solutions for you by getting to know you and your world. The “Your World” approach can be summarized with the phrase, “You tell me what you'd like to protect, and we'll go from there.” This simple sentence helps Farm Bureau agents identify new areas where you may need protection. “Your World” is also a

truly long-term insurance strategy that ensures you'll have consistent and uniform coverage that will cost less over the long haul.

One key element of Farm Bureau's “Your World” approach is the “Your World” risk chart that our agents review with you. The underlying questions elicited by the chart are, “Is my world okay? Do I have protection if any of the things listed on the chart happen?” The chart is simple, easy to understand, and reveals what the world of risk looks like to you specifically. This holistic approach focuses on the protection your insurance portfolio provides and the problems it solves for you.

“Whenever we hear potential customers say they feel they're over-insured,” says Ron Leavitt, vice president of sales



Farm Bureau's holistic approach to insurance focuses on the protection your insurance portfolio provides and the problems it solves for you.

and marketing, “the odds are good that they haven't used the holistic insurance method that Farm Bureau Insurance's ‘Your World’ approach provides.”

If your Farm Bureau agent

hasn't already reviewed your coverage with you using the “Your World” approach, give them a call today. It's free, and you'll have the peace of mind that comes with knowing your world is protected.

FORESTRY

Continued from page 19

<http://www.extension.uidaho.edu/publishing/pdf/SB/SB67.pdf>. We also have an excellent publication designed to help family forest owners reduce fire risk on the entire forest as well, titled Reducing Fire Risk on Your Property (PNW 618) and available at <https://catalog.extension.oregonstate.edu/pnw618>.

Many of these tasks are easier

to accomplish with professional help. Limited on-site professional forestry technical assistance is available through the Idaho Department of Lands and some Natural Resources Conservation Service offices, but the most complete assistance is through a professional consulting forester. For more information on the range of forestry assistance available and a directory of Idaho consulting

foresters, we have a new UI Extension publication, titled Working with a Professional Forester (CIS 1226) available at <http://www.extension.uidaho.edu/publishing/pdf/CIS/CIS1226.pdf>. A consulting forester is especially helpful if you are considering a timber harvest for the property, where they can be the landowners' legal representative in working with the mills and with loggers.

Forest ownership and stewardship is a rewarding and meaningful endeavor. Taking these first steps will help ensure that new forest owners are well on their way to effectively managing their forestland to meet their goals.

Chris Schnepf is an area extension educator in forestry for the University of Idaho in Bonner, Boundary, Kootenai and Benewah counties. He can be reached at cschnepf@uidaho.edu

Exploring Farm DEMOGRAPHICS

There are **3.2 MILLION** U.S. farm operators who work on **2.1 MILLION** farms. They run the farm, making decisions about planning, harvesting, feeding, marketing and so on. Operators may be owners, members of the owner's household, a hired manager, a tenant, a renter or a sharecropper. The average age of principal farm operators has been steadily increasing over the past three decades and is now 58.



The number of farm operators of **SPANISH, HISPANIC** or **LATINO** origin is **HIGHER** than ever, **UP 21 PERCENT** to 99,734. There also are **MORE AFRICAN AMERICAN** (44,629, up 12 percent) and **AMERICAN INDIAN** (58,475, up 5 percent) farm operators.

WOMEN make up 30 percent (969,672) of the total number of farm operators.

The **MILLENNIAL GENERATION** (people age 34 and under) includes 257,454 farmers.

More than 20 percent of all farmers are **BEGINNING FARMERS** (in business less than 10 years).

TEXAS has the **MOST FARMS** (248,809), followed by Missouri (99,171), Iowa (88,637), Oklahoma (80,245) and California (77,857).

Total land in farms was estimated at 915 million acres in 2012, a decrease of 1 million acres since 2007.

Farms are getting **BIGGER**. The average farm size was 434 acres in 2012, compared to 418 acres in 2007.

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Sources: Census of Agriculture (2012); USDA-ERS

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WORD SEARCH

ANSWERS from page 25

Solution

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V	O	L	F	W	S	N	A	C	E	P	G	F	O	T
B	U	R	G	U	N	D	Y	M	D	O	G	R	H	A
M	I	D	E	A	S	T	E	R	N	N	E	E	P	L
W	R	T	Y	G	P	N	T	M	F	G	K	N	O	I
S	C	G	L	K	O	T	M	U	O	Y	B	C	I	A
Q	L	D	K	F	R	N	P	N	S	M	N	H	L	N
U	F	R	E	N	C	H	B	L	A	C	K	K	P	W
I	I	W	Q	H	P	L	R	R	R	L	A	T	Q	H
S	R	Y	T	B	A	N	I	M	O	E	P	N	J	I
H	M	D	L	C	R	E	T	N	I	W	M	N	S	T
Y	W	N	K	M	Q	K	T	R	S	Y	N	M	D	E
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N	C	H	I	N	E	S	E	C	Q	N	L	P	N	S
I	T	A	L	I	A	N	T	R	U	F	F	L	E	S

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GET READY TO SAMPLE





DeAnn Waddell, Teton County women's committee chair, speaks to participants of the Idaho Farm Bureau Women's Leadership Conference, which was held in Moscow March 16-17.

Idaho Farm Bureau Women's 2018 Leadership Conference

By Sherril Tillotson

Farm Bureau women from across Idaho met together at the Best Western Convention Center in Moscow, Idaho, March 16-17 to attend the annual Idaho Farm Bureau Women's Leadership Conference. The conference is structured to provide training and information for women in agriculture to become strong leaders in their communities as they advocate for agriculture through education, community service and policy development.

The conference kicked off with an early morning tour at the University of Idaho



Sherril Tillotson, District 1 women's committee representative, addresses participants of the Idaho Farm Bureau Women's Leadership Conference, which was held March 16-17 in Moscow.

that included group meetings with researchers who provided information and visual demonstrations about several agricultural research projects, including certified seed potatoes, horticulture, dairy and genetically modified organisms. The ladies were each given the opportunity to work up a DNA sample in a small test tube and an overview of how the process is completed from beginning to end.

A highlight of the conference on March 16 was guest speaker Bruce Vincent, who is a third-generation logger from Libby, Mont. His inspiring talk provided humorous and statistical information about environmental issues and other concerns confronting the logging industry and the experiences of his family through the years.

The conference included hands-on workshops for attendees as they learned to promote "Farming on the Patio," gained knowledge of the "New Addiction" (pornography) gripping the population and efforts to fight the damaging impact to families and individuals.

A workshop of information was presented about policy development processes and there was a visual vehicle tour workshop of Idaho reflecting agriculture products in every area of the state on a board designed and presented by District 2. Ending the conference was leadership training ac-

tivities for team building led by Chairman Judy Woody and Vice Chair Allis Chandler.

Attendees battled a spring snow storm as they returned to their homes following the conference, empowered, excited and ready to return to their communities with new information to further the promotion of agriculture throughout the state.



Bruce Vincent, a logger from Libby, Mont., talks about environmental issues and other concerns confronting the logging industry, during the Idaho Farm Bureau Women's Leadership Conference, which was held March 16-17 in Moscow.

SPOTLIGHT ON IDAHO FFA—Growing Tomorrow’s Agricultural Leaders

Idaho FFA Elects New State Leadership

Idaho FFA wrapped up the 87th Annual State FFA Leadership conference in Twin Falls on April 7 with the announcement of the 2018-19 State FFA Officer Team.

The new officers began their training in April and will spend the next year serving Idaho’s 5,000 FFA members, promoting the FFA Organization and advocating for Idaho agriculture.



2018-19 Idaho State FFA Officer Team

(Pictured from left) Harrison Jansen van Beek, State Vice President, Middleton FFA; Caleb Johnston, State Sentinel, New Plymouth FFA; Savannah Stroebel, State Reporter, Kuna FFA; Allyson King, State Secretary, Filer FFA; Saydee Longhurst, State President, Shelley FFA; and Melanie Searle, State Treasurer, Burley FFA.

To learn more about Idaho FFA, please visit:
www.idahoffa.org
www.idffaoundation.org

Idaho Farm Bureau proudly sponsors the Idaho FFA Extemporaneous Public Speaking Career Development Event



2018 Idaho FFA Extemporaneous Public Speaking Champion

Zachary Boyd, Rigby FFA

The Extemporaneous Public Speaking Career Development Event challenges FFA members to prepare and deliver a factual speech on a specific agricultural issue in a logical manner – in a short amount of time. Participants draw a topic and have 30 minutes to prepare their four to six minute speeches. A panel of judges uses an additional five minutes to question the speaker on their assigned topic. Through this event, students develop a broad knowledge of current agricultural issues, as well as polish logical reasoning and effective communication skills that will allow them to excel in the classroom and beyond.

Zachary Boyd, Rigby FFA, placed first in the 2018 state event held during the State FFA Leadership Conference in Twin Falls in April. He will represent Idaho at the National FFA Convention in October. Kaitlin Mirkin, Jerome FFA placed second; Sara Trees, Genesee FFA was 3rd; and Katie Hettinga, Kuna FFA was fourth.



FFA—Premier Leadership, Personal Growth and Career Success through Agricultural Education

Idaho Farm Bureau announces support for legislative candidates



Idaho Farm Bureau Federation has a Political Action Committee named Agra-PAC. The purpose of the PAC is to financially support state legislative candidates who are philosophically aligned with Farm Bureau policies and help them win their election.

Individual Farm Bureau members and county Farm Bureaus contribute to the PAC and County Farm Bureau evaluation committees recommend which candidates the PAC should support.

The legislative candidates that Agra-PAC has financially supported for the 2018 primary are:

District 1 (Boundary, Bonner counties)	House Seat A	Heather Scott	Blanchard
District 2 (Kootenai County)	House Seat A	Vito Barbieri	Dalton Gardens
District 3 (Kootenai County)	House Seat B	Kathy Sims	Coeur d'Alene
District 4 (Kootenai County)	Senate	Mary Souza	Coeur d'Alene
	House Seat B	Paul Amador	Coeur d'Alene
District 5 (Benewah and Latah counties)	Senate	Dan Foreman	Moscow
	House Seat A	Hari Heath	Santa
District 7 (Bonner, Clearwater, Idaho, Shoshone)	House Seat A	Shannon McMillan	Silverton
	House Seat B	Paul Shepherd	Riggins
District 8 (Boise, Custer, Gem, Lemhi, Valley)	Senate	Steven Thayn	Emmett
District 11 (Canyon County)	Senate	Patti Anne Lodge	Huston
	House Seat A	Scott Syme	Caldwell
District 13 (Canyon County)	House Seat B	Gary Collins	Nampa
District 15 (Ada County)	Senate	Fred S. Martin	Boise
District 20 (Ada County)	Senate	Chuck Winder	Boise
District 22 (Ada County)	House Seat B	Jason Monks	Nampa
District 23 (Owyhee, Elmore, Twin Falls)	House Seat A	Christy Zito	Hammett
District 24 (Twin Falls County)	Senate	Lee Heider	Twin Falls
	House Seat B	Linda Hartgen	Twin Falls
District 25 (Twin Falls and Jerome counties)	Senate	Jim Patrick	Twin Falls
	House Seat A	Laurie Lickley	Jerome
	House Seat B	Clark Kauffman	Filer
District 28 (Bannock and Power counties)	Senate	Jim Guthrie	Inkom
District 30 (Bonneville County)	House Seat B	Wendy Horman	Idaho Falls
District 31 (Bingham County)	House Seat B	Julie VanOrden	Pingree
District 32 (Caribou, Franklin, Bear Lake Springs)	Senate	Mark Harris	Soda
	House Seat B	Tom Loertscher	Iona
District 34 (Bonneville and Madison counties)	House Seat A	Ronald Nate	Rexburg
	House Seat B	Britt Raybould	Rexburg
District 35 (Butte, Clark, Jefferson, Fremont)	Senate	Van Burtenshaw	Terretton
	House Seat A	Jerald Raymond	Menan
	House Seat B	Karey Hanks	St. Anthony

We encourage you to support the candidates listed in red at the polls in the primary election on May 15. Agra-PAC believes they are the candidates most likely to support agriculture and Farm Bureau policies.

All other candidates listed below do not have an opponent in the primary election, but Agra-PAC has made a contribution to their campaign and we encourage you to cast your vote for them at the general election in November.

District 1 (Boundary, Bonner counties)	House Seat B — Sage Dixon , Ponderay
District 2 (Kootenai County)	Senate — Steve Vick , Dalton Gardens
District 3 (Kootenai County)	Senate — Don Cheatham , Post Falls
	House Seat A — Ron Mendive , Coeur d'Alene
District 5 (Benewah and Latah counties)	House Seat B — Caroline Nilsson Troy , Genesee
District 6 (Lewis and Nez Perce counties)	Senate — Dan Johnson , Lewiston
	House Seat A — Thyra Stevenson , Nezperce
	House Seat B — Mike Kingsley , Lewiston
District 7 (Bonner, Clearwater, Idaho, Shoshone counties)	Senate — Carl Crabtree , Grangeville
District 8 (Boise, Custer, Gem, Lemhi, Valley counties)	House Seat A — Terry F. Gestrin , Donnelly
	House Seat B — Dorothy Moon , Stanley
District 9 (Adams, Canyon, Payette, Washington counties)	Senate — Abby Lee , Fruitland
	House Seat B — Judy Boyle , Midvale
District 10 (Canyon County)	Senate — Jim Rice , Caldwell
	House Seat A — Jarom Wagener , Caldwell
	House Seat B — Greg Chaney , Caldwell
District 12 (Canyon County)	Senate — Todd Lakey , Nampa
	House Seat A — Robert Anderst , Nampa
	House Seat B — Rick Youngblood , Nampa
District 13 (Canyon County)	Senate — Jeff Agenbroad , Nampa
	House Seat A — Brent Crane , Nampa
District 14 (Ada County)	House Seat A — Mike Moyle , Star
	House Seat B — Gayann DeMordaunt , Eagle
District 15 (Ada County)	House Seat A — Lynn M. Luker , Boise
	House Seat B — Patrick McDonald , Boise
District 20 (Ada County)	House Seat A — Joe Palmer , Meridian
	House Seat B — James Holtzclaw , Meridian
District 21 (Ada County)	Senate — Clifford Bayer , Meridian
	House Seat A — Steven C. Harris , Meridian
	House Seat B — Thomas E. Dayley , Boise
District 22 (Ada County)	Senate — Lori Den Hartog , Meridian
	House Seat A — John Vander Woude , Nampa
District 23 (Owyhee, Elmore, Twin Falls counties)	House Seat B — Megan Blanksma , Hammett
District 24 (Twin Falls County)	House Seat A — Lance W. Clow , Twin Falls
District 26 (Blaine, Camas, Gooding, Lincoln counties)	House Seat A — Steve Miller , Fairfield
District 27 (Minidoka and Cassia counties)	Senate — Kelly Anthon , Burley
	House Seat A — Scott Bedke , Oakley
District 29 (Bannock County)	House Seat A — Dustin Manwaring , Pocatello
District 30 (Bonneville County)	Senate — Dean Mortimer , Idaho Falls
District 31 (Bingham County)	Senate — Steven Bair , Blackfoot
	House Seat A — Neil A. Anderson , Blackfoot
District 32 (Caribou, Franklin, Bear Lake counties)	House Seat A — Marc Gibbs , Grace
District 33 (Bonneville County)	House Seat A — Barbara Ehardt , Idaho Falls
	House Seat B — Bryan Zollinger , Idaho Falls
District 34 (Bonneville and Madison counties)	Senate — Brent Hill , Rexburg

Idaho Farm Bureau ‘Friend of Agriculture’ recipients

Every two years, Idaho Farm Bureau Federation reviews the votes on selected bills that are important to our membership to determine which legislators will receive the prestigious IFBF “Friend of Agriculture” award. This year, 14 senators and 44 representatives received the coveted award for voting with Farm Bureau more than 94 percent of the time.

A total of 19 bills were used for our legislative scorecard during the 2017 and 2018 sessions. Bill subjects included property rights, taxes,

stock water, dyed fuel, depredation, produce safety, crop residue burning and other important issues.

“We sincerely appreciate those legislators who take the time to learn about the issues and make informed decisions, especially when it concerns agriculture,” said Bryan Searle, president of Idaho Farm Bureau Federation. “We express our gratitude to each of these legislators for their outstanding support of Idaho agriculture and Idaho Farm Bureau policies.”

Please show your support for these “Friends of Agriculture” as you vote May 15 in the primary election.

Full voting record results of all legislators are available on our website at idahofb.org under the “Legislative” button.

Legislators denoted by ****name in red**** are retiring from office this year.

District 1 (Boundary, Bonner counties)



House Seat A —
Heather Scott, Blanchard



House Seat B —
Sage Dixon, Ponderay

District 2 (Kootenai County)



Senate —
Steve Vick, Dalton Gardens



House Seat A —
Vito Barbieri, Dalton Gardens



House Seat B —
****Eric Redman, Athol****

District 3 (Kootenai County)



Senate —
****Bob Nonini, Coeur d’Alene****



House Seat A —
Ron Mendive, Coeur d’Alene



House Seat B —
Don Cheatham, Post Falls

District 4 (Kootenai County)



Senate —
Mary Souza, Coeur d’Alene



House Seat A —
****Luke Malek, Coeur d’Alene****

District 5 (Benewah and Latah counties)



House Seat B —
Paul Amador, Coeur d’Alene
District 5 (Benewah and Latah counties)



House Seat B —
Caroline Nilsson Troy, Genesee

District 6 (Lewis and Nez Perce counties)



House Seat A —
Thyra Stevenson, Nezperce



House Seat B —
Mike Kingsley, Lewiston

District 7 (Bonner, Clearwater, Idaho, Shoshone counties)



Senate —
Carl Crabtree, Grangeville



House Seat B —
Paul Shepherd, Riggins

District 8 (Boise, Custer, Gem, Lemhi, Valley counties)



Senate —
Steven Thayn, Emmett



House Seat A —
Terry F. Gestrin, Donnelly



House Seat B —
Dorothy Moon, Stanley

District 9 (Adams, Canyon, Payette, Washington counties)



House Seat A —
Ryan Kerby, New Plymouth



House Seat B —
Judy Boyle, Midvale

District 10 (Canyon County)



Senate — Jim Rice, Caldwell



House Seat B —
Greg Chaney, Caldwell

District 11 (Canyon County)



House Seat A —
Scott Syme, Caldwell

District 12 (Canyon County)



House Seat A —
Robert Anderst, Nampa



House Seat B —
Rick Youngblood, Nampa

District 13 (Canyon County)



Senate —
Jeff Agenbroad, Nampa



House Seat A —
Brent Crane, Nampa



House Seat B —
Gary Collins, Nampa

District 14 (Ada County)



House Seat A —
Mike Moyle, Star



House Seat B —
Patrick McDonald, Boise

District 20 (Ada County)



House Seat A —
Joe Palmer, Meridian



House Seat B —
James Holtzclaw, Meridian

District 21 (Ada County)



Senate —
Clifford R. Bayer, Meridian



House Seat B —
Thomas E. Dayley, Boise

District 22 (Ada County)



Senate —
Lori Den Hartog, Meridian



House Seat A —
John Vander Woude, Nampa



House Seat B —
Jason Monks, Nampa

District 23 (Owyhee, Elmore,
Twin Falls counties)



House Seat A —
Christy Zito, Hammett



House Seat B —
Megan Blanksma, Hammett

District 26 (Blaine, Camas,
Gooding, Lincoln Counties)



House Seat A —
Steve Miller, Fairfield

District 27 (Minidoka and
Cassia counties)



House Seat A —
Scott Bedke, Oakley

District 28 (Bannock and Power
counties)



Senate — Jim Guthrie,
Inkom



House Seat B —
****Kelley Packer,
McCammon****

District 30 (Bonneville County)



Senate —
Dean Mortimer, Idaho Falls



House Seat A —
Jeff D. Thompson, Idaho Falls



House Seat B —
Wendy Horman, Idaho Falls

District 31 (Bingham County)



Senate —
Steven Bair, Blackfoot



House Seat A —
Neil A. Anderson, Blackfoot



House Seat B —
Julie VanOrden, Pingree

District 32 (Caribou, Franklin,
Bear Lake counties)



Senate —
Mark Harris, Soda Springs



House Seat B —
Tom Loertscher, Iona

District 33
(Bonneville County)



Senate —
Tony Potts, Idaho Falls



House Seat A —
Barbara Ehardt, Idaho Falls



House Seat B —
Bryan Zollinger, Idaho Falls

District 34 (Bonneville and
Madison counties)



House Seat A —
Ronald M. Nate, Rexburg

District 35 (Butte, Clark,
Jefferson, Fremont counties)



House Seat A —
Van Burtenshaw, Terreton



House Seat B —
Karey Hanks, St. Anthony



Photo by Sean Ellis

Farm workers prune vines in a vineyard near Caldwell in southwestern Idaho in early April. Average earnings for workers in Idaho increased at the fastest rate in the nation last year, which has resulted in some farmers and ranchers having a harder time finding employees.

Idaho farm labor market gets tighter as earnings rise

By Sean Ellis

Idaho Farm Bureau Federation

BOISE – Idaho led the nation in earnings growth last year and, partly as a result, Idaho’s farmers and ranchers are having a harder time finding workers.

Producers say the state’s farm labor market has been tightening for several years but the increased wage growth is exacerbating the situation.

According to the U.S. Department of Commerce, the average earnings for workers in Idaho increased 5.3 percent in 2017, the fastest clip in the nation and well ahead of the average national increase of 3.1 percent.

According to the Idaho Department of Labor, the state’s unemployment rate was 3 percent

in February, well below the national rate of 4.1 percent.

The low unemployment rate and higher earnings are making it harder for farmers and ranchers to find workers and they’re also having to pay their current employees more to keep them.

“We’re paying well above minimum wage and it’s still hard to attract qualified skilled workers,” said Michael Williamson, manager of Williamson Orchards and Vineyards in Caldwell. “The labor situation is pretty tight and it’s not getting better.”

According to the IDL, the average wage in Idaho for people involved in agriculture was \$34,938 last year. That’s well below the average wage of \$40,561 for all industries and

\$42,297 for the construction industry.

In the Treasure Valley of southwestern Idaho, where the construction industry is booming, farmers face a tough time attracting workers who can often make more money in that industry, said Ron Bitner, who owns a vineyard and winery in Caldwell.

The average wage for construction workers in southwestern Idaho in 2017 was \$44,356 while people working in the agricultural sector had an average wage of \$33,197.

“It’s been harder to find experienced workers. They’re all off in construction,” Bitner said.

The labor shortage in that area is causing wage wars for gener-

al laborers such as pipe movers, said Meridian farmer Richard Durrant.

He said he’s having to start people off at \$2 an hour more.

“It’s getting tighter and tighter,” Durrant said.

As workers become harder to find, more Idaho farming operations are turning to the federal H-2A guest worker program, which allows foreign workers to work in the United States for up to 10 months.

“My phone is ringing all the time from people who want to do H-2A,” said Jennifer Urauga, who owns and manages Mountain West Ag Consulting, which specializes in the H-2A program.

See *FARM LABOR* p.39

Groundwork for the Farm Bill

By Sen. Mike Crapo

A quote from our nation's first president, George Washington, about the central role of agricultural production is inscribed on the exterior of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's main building in Washington, D.C.: "With reference either to individual or national welfare agriculture is of primary importance."

This importance is deeply felt in Idaho communities, where farms and ranches put food on our tables and support jobs. The need for timely reauthorization of the next Farm Bill is a message heard clearly in my travels around Idaho and meetings with food producers. I thank Idahoans for input on this important legislation and encourage you to continue to share your views as Farm Bill reauthorization discussions take shape.

The Idaho State Department of Agriculture reports that approximately 25,000 farms and ranches produce more than 185 different agricultural commodities in Idaho. These producers are responsible for Idaho leading or being ranked among the top states in the production of alfalfa hay, barley, beans, cheese, hops, lentils, mint, onions, peas, potatoes, sugar beets, trout, wheat and other commodities, and livestock outnumber people in Idaho.

Idahoans produce far more than can be consumed within the state and are feeding the world — selling nearly \$2 billion of Idaho's produce, grains, meats, dairy and seeds worldwide, ac-

ording to the ISDA.

Idaho agriculture is influenced by a variety of factors, including federal policies and programs. Throughout my time in Congress, I have greatly valued opportunities to work with Idahoans to help shape past Farm Bills to try to ensure that federal farm policy best empowers Idaho production. The current Farm Bill expires September 2018, and reauthorization discussions are underway in Congress.

It is important to also remember that the Farm Bill affects a wide swath of federal policy far beyond traditional agricultural commodity programs. Federal nutrition, conservation, rural development, energy, world market access, forestry, specialty crop, organics and many other programs are part of the Farm Bill. For example, incentives, rather than mandates, provided through Farm Bill conservation programs, are the best way to achieve environmental results on private land and contribute more to enhancing our environment than any other federal policy.

Provisions in the last Farm Bill, the 2014 Farm Bill, reshaped the structure of farm commodity support, expanded crop insurance coverage, consolidated conservation programs, reauthorized and revised nutrition assistance, and more. As for many past Farm Bills, the budget is a major consideration for the next Farm Bill debate. Updated Congressional Budget Office estimates indicate that the 2014 Farm Bill is expected to cost less than projected when it was enacted. This means the new budget baseline for the next Farm Bill will provide lawmakers with less spending authority to work with than the 2014 bill, which will present some challenges. My priority for the next Farm Bill is to ensure that Idaho producers' concerns and priorities are addressed during the reauthorization process.

Important in this effort is the understanding that the agriculture economy has had its fair share of challenges the past few years, characterized by low commodity prices and decreased farm revenues. Additionally, food demands are increasing with rising world



U.S. Sen. Mike Crapo, R-Idaho

populations. We are asking farmers and ranchers to meet these demands, while pressures on land, water and other requirements are also increasing.

The next Farm Bill must continue to make wise use of taxpayer dollars, but also provide an appropriate safety net and risk management tools to allow our nation's farmers and ranchers to weather difficult times. I encourage those interested in these issues to contact me with your views as Congress considers this legislation that affects so much of America.

This column was submitted by U.S. Sen. Mike Crapo, R-Idaho.



Sen. Mike Crapo, R-Idaho, listens to input from leaders of Idaho farm groups during an August listening session in Parma about the new Farm Bill.

11 enviro-facts about farmers and ranchers

By Cyndie Shearing

On Earth Day (April 22) and throughout the year, farmers and ranchers are dedicated to an important mission – feeding Americans so we don't have to depend on other nations for our most basic need. Check out 11 enviro-facts about how farmers produce a bounty of food for consumers below.

- Farmers drink the same water and breathe the same air as their neighbors, which is why they are committed to protecting and sustaining the environment for their families, their communities and for future generations. Farmers respect, support and abide by strict environmental standards on their farms.

- Farms today produce more food with fewer resources than

ever before. While farm and ranch productivity has increased dramatically since 1950, the use of resources (labor, seeds, feed, fertilizer, etc.) required for production has declined markedly.

- Protecting the land is in the economic interest of farmers and ranchers, as well as society overall. America's farmers and ranchers take their commitment to land stewardship very seriously.

- GPS-based mapping, auto-steer guidance systems and variable-rate technology for applying crop inputs such as pesticides and fertilizer are used by farmers to increase yields, lower costs and reduce chemical use, which benefits the environment.

- With the world population expected to grow to 9.7 billion by

2050, precision agriculture will play a role in helping farmers reduce inputs while increasing productivity to meet the growing demand for food.

- Through modern conservation and tillage practices, farmers and ranchers are reducing the loss of soil through erosion, which protects lakes and rivers. Careful stewardship by America's food producers has spurred a nearly 50-percent decline in soil erosion on cropland since 1982.

- Advanced conservation practices are used on more than 50 percent of cropland acres.

- A whopping 282 million gallons of diesel fuel are saved annually by farmers who practice continuous no-till crop farming.

- With modern agriculture practices, one acre of land (about the size of a football field) in the U.S. can produce 50,000 pounds of strawberries or 2,784 pounds of wheat or 821 pounds of cotton.

- Rice farms provide \$3.5 billion in value in ecological services as wetlands.

- Farmers are producing more milk from dairy cows with fewer resources. The pounds of feed (grain, forage, etc.) a cow needs to consume to produce 100 pounds of milk has decreased by more than 40 percent on average in the last 30 years.

Cyndie Shearing is director of internal communications at American Farm Bureau Federation.

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Marketbasket Survey

Spring survey finds higher food retail prices



Higher retail prices for several foods including eggs, orange juice, meat products, bagged salad, shredded cheddar and vegetable oil resulted in a slight increase in the American Farm Bureau Federation's Spring Picnic Marketbasket Survey.

The informal survey showed the total cost of 16 food items that can be used to prepare one or more meals was \$51.05, up \$1.02 or 2 percent compared to a year ago. Of the 16 items surveyed, nine increased and seven decreased in average price.

"Most of the increase in the marketbasket was due to higher retail egg prices. Easter eggs are going to be a bit more expensive—37 percent higher than a year ago," said John Newton, AFBF's director of market intelligence. "U.S. egg exports were up nearly 50 percent in 2017 while egg production remained flat."

A bird flu outbreak in South Korea contributed to the increase in U.S. export volumes.

"A surge in egg exports combined with relatively flat production led to the strong rise in retail

egg prices," Newton said.

"Orange juice was another significant driver for the increase in the basket, up 24 cents or 7.5 percent. A devastating hurricane late last year that came through parts of Florida, where most orange juice comes from, led to growers harvesting the smallest crop in 70 years," he added.

Several foods showed modest retail price decreases from a year ago: whole milk, white bread, chicken breasts, toasted oat cereal, apples, potatoes and flour.

Milk decreased in price by 6 percent (20 cents per gallon) due to continued record production volumes in the United States and a very competitive beverage case.

Price checks of alternative milk and egg choices not included in the overall marketbasket survey average revealed the following: half-gallon whole regular milk, \$2.04; half-gallon organic milk, \$4.24; and one dozen "cage-free" eggs, \$3.53.

The year-to-year direction of the marketbasket survey tracks closely

with the federal government's Consumer Price Index (<http://www.bls.gov/news.release/cpi.nr0.htm>) report for food at home. As retail grocery prices have increased gradually over time, the share of the average food dollar that America's farm and ranch families receive has dropped.

"Through the mid-1970s, farmers received about one-third of consumer retail food expenditures for food eaten at home and away from home, on average. Since then, that figure has decreased steadily and is now about 14.8 percent, according to the Agriculture Department's revised Food Dollar Series," Newton said.

AFBF, the nation's largest general farm organization, began conducting informal marketbasket surveys of retail food price trends in 1989. The current series includes a spring picnic survey, summer cook-out survey, and Thanksgiving dinner cost survey. A total of 93 shoppers in 23 states participated in the latest AFBF survey, conducted in March 2018.

According to USDA,



Retail price changes from a year ago:

- eggs, up 37 percent to \$1.80 per dozen
- orange juice, up 8 percent to \$3.46 per half-gallon
- bagged salad, up 4 percent to \$2.42 per pound
- deli ham, up 3 percent to \$5.59 per pound
- vegetable oil, up 2 percent to \$2.61 for a 32-ounce bottle
- shredded cheddar cheese, up 2 percent to \$4.20 per pound
- ground chuck, up 2 percent to \$4.01 per pound
- bacon, up 2 percent to \$4.75 per pound
- sirloin tip roast, up 2 percent to \$5.12 per pound
- white bread, down 7 percent to \$1.60 per 20-ounce loaf
- whole milk, down 6 percent to \$3.07 per gallon
- chicken breast, down 2 percent to \$3.10 per pound
- toasted oat cereal, down 2 percent to \$2.78 for a 9-ounce box
- apples, down 1 percent to \$1.53 per pound

Americans spend just under 10 percent of their disposable annual income on food, the lowest average of any country in the world.

FARM LABOR

Continued from page 35

She said she is working with 12 new growers in Idaho this year who didn't use the H-2A program last year.

Nationwide, H-2A applications during the first quarter of this year were up 15 percent over the same period last year, Uranga said. While the Idaho numbers aren't available for the first quarter, it's a safe bet they were up substantially, she added.

The shortage of farm laborers "is a growing problem and it's going to continue to be a problem," Uranga said.

Some farmers, such as Durrant, said they can't make the H-2A program pencil out financially for their operation.

Williamson said he is seriously considering the H-2A program

but his and other fruit operations are also moving to new cropping systems that will allow them to use automation when the technology is available at a workable price.

That includes adjusting the size and shape of trees and vineyards "so that they can be adapted to the use of automation pretty quickly when the technology gets there at a price that makes sense," he said.

The farm labor shortage is acute for Idaho's 470 dairy operations, said Rick Naerebout, director of operations for the Idaho Dairymen's Association.

"Most of our dairies are running on crews that are short of workers," he said.

Naerebout said the industry



Photo by Sean Ellis

Farm workers prune vines in a vineyard near Caldwell in southwestern Idaho in early April. Average earnings for workers in Idaho increased at the fastest rate in the nation last year, which has resulted in some farmers and ranchers having a harder time finding employees.

classifies the labor shortage as a crisis.

"It is our No. 1 issue right now," he said.

While automation, such as the use of robotic milking machines, is a solution for some

dairies, "It's certainly not the answer for the entire industry" because it's capital intensive, Naerebout said.

The main solution, he said, would be having Congress pass common-sense immigration reform.

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TRESPASS

Continued from page 16

willfully trespass on someone else's land.

During public testimony on House Bill 658, farmers, ranchers and other property owners made it a point of telling lawmakers that they and most other landowners are quick to grant permission for hunters, anglers and other outdoorsmen to recreate on their land if they ask first.

Rather than eliminating posting requirements, as some opponents claimed, the legislation actually adds additional posting requirements.

It requires posting unfenced, uncultivated land at property corners and where the property line intersects navigable streams, roads, gates and

rights-of-way. The property must also be posted so that a reasonable person would know they are entering private land. This posting requirement is a higher standard than under current law.

House Bill 658 closes a loophole in previous law that could allow a trespasser to hang around in a property owner's backyard – for example, while they are on vacation – until actually told to leave. In what free society is this acceptable?

The legislation was supported by a 34-group coalition that includes all of the state's main farming groups as well as utilities, mining, business, industry, retailer, forestry and recreation organizations.



Photo by Steve Ritter

In Idaho, private property owners and outdoorsmen have long enjoyed a great relationship and the trouble caused by trespassers is limited to a very few people with woeful disregard for landowners' fundamental property rights.

By clarifying the state's trespassing laws and providing

some teeth to deter trespassing, House Bill 658 should only serve to improve the relationship between landowners and outdoorsmen.

For more information on the legislation, visit the Farm Bureau website at www.idahofb.org.



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RECHARGE

Continued from page 6

ter's extremely abundant snow-pack levels, which are still providing ample water to fill reservoirs, increase stream flows and perform recharge, Hipke said.

"We have a lot of water. Obviously, that was a big help," he said.

He said the program won't be able to recharge close to 500,000 acre-feet every year and during a dry year, the most that can be recharged into the ESPA is about 150,000 acre-feet.

"We are not always going to be able to do 500,000 acre-feet," he said. "It's great when we can, but in these wet years, we need to capture as much as we possibly can to make up for those really dry years. When it's available, we need to move as much

as we can."

The significant amount of recharge accomplished the past two seasons is proof that the millions of dollars the state has invested in recent years in improving and expanding the infrastructure needed to perform recharge is paying off, said Brian Patton, planning bureau chief for the IWRB.

The recharge program began to significantly increase its capacity after 2014 when Idaho lawmakers began providing a significant amount of money to expand infrastructure, he said.

"It's really exciting to see what we can do now compared to what we could do before," Patton said. "I think this is a great investment on the part of the state of Idaho."



Submitted photo

Water flows into an Eastern Snake Plain Aquifer recharge site in this Idaho Water Resource Board file photo. A record 419,000 acre-feet of water has been recharged into the ESPA so far this year and there's a chance that total could reach 500,000 acre-feet before the 2017-18 recharge season ends.

Chase said the enhanced ability to recharge water into the aquifer has been a cooperative effort between the water board, legislature, governor, the canal and irrigation companies that make their ditches available to perform the recharge, and the taxpayers, who provided the money to improve the pro-

gram's infrastructure.

"I think it's important to recognize the effort that the entire state of Idaho has made to make this work," he said. "Our program is a success because everybody in the state understood the importance of recharge and found a way to do it."



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